

Meeting #2 Summary

Water Comprehensive Plan Task Force

April 9, 2007: Saint Paul Regional Water Services
Meeting Notes by Andrew Jacobson

Members Present: George Johnson (chair), Yung Kang Lu, Cliff Aichinger, Sarah Clark, Marj Ebensteiner, Bruce Elder, Bob Fossum, Boa Lee, Hakan Miller, Gregory Page, Shirley Reider, Steve Schneider, Obi Sium, Ron Struss and Rebecca Wooden

Members Absent: Steve Johnson and John Wells

Staff Present: Larry Soderholm, Anne Hunt, Kou Vang, Larry Zangs, Jie Zhao and Andrew Jacobson

1. **Welcome** by George Johnson and Steve Schneider. The members and staff introduced themselves.
2. **Sanitary sewer requirements** reviewed by Bruce Elder, Public Works. Elder gave an overview of sanitary sewers in Saint Paul: treatment demand has been decreasing with the loss of major industrial customers and increasing conservation efforts; Saint Paul has few boundary connections with other municipalities; some septic systems remain in the Highwood area; and inflow and infiltration (I/I) continues to be an issue for our aging sewers.

The sanitary sewer portion of the comprehensive plan will be similar to what is in the current Land Use Plan. The process will mainly be completed by staff and will be reported to the task force at the September 10, 2007 meeting.

3. **Requirements for the water supply portion of the Water Comp Plan** were reviewed by Larry Soderholm. The requirements are mentioned in the Scoping Report and they are detailed in the *2030 Water Resources Management Policy Plan*. The Water Supply Plan was completed by SPRWS and approved by the Metropolitan Council in January, 2007. Legally, therefore, the water supply portion of the Water Comprehensive Plan is finished. Yet, the purpose of our discussion is to a) learn about the plan, and b) decide what policies should be gleaned from the plan for the City's Water Comp Plan.
4. **Introduction to the Water Supply Plan (aka Water Emergency and Conservation Plan)** by Saint Paul Regional Water Services (SPRWS) director Steve Schneider. A Water Emergency and Conservation Plan (WECP) is required by law to be completed every ten years for water utilities serving over 1,000 customers. The plan is reviewed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). For utilities within the seven county metro area, extra demand

projections are included in the plan which is then submitted to the Met Council for approval. The Met Council uses the name ‘Water Supply Plan’ for the plan and we will use that name in our task force materials also.

The plan contains four major parts: a description of the water supply, an emergency response overview, a water conservation plan and projections for future demand.

Schneider also noted that in the early history of Saint Paul’s water utility, they used tremendous foresight to buy water rights far north of the downtown. Schneider also noted that water use has been declining recently, due to the loss of major manufacturers and increasing water conservation practices. Schneider distributed a publication called “Tapping the Waters” that gives a detailed history and timeline of the early period of SPRWS.

5. **Presentation of the Water Supply Plan** by Kou Vang, SPRWS. Vang presented a PowerPoint overview of the Water Supply Plan. The PowerPoint slides were copied and included in the information sent before the meeting. Many questions were asked and discussed during the presentation that went beyond the scope of the slides. These discussions are summarized below.

- McCarron’s water treatment plant procedures: detailed in the “Beyond the Faucet” publication.
 - Booster stations and numerous reservoirs, which are located throughout the city, help increase and keep a constant water pressure. The reservoirs also provide water for emergency use such as fire fighting.
 - Agricultural and other hazardous chemicals have not been found in sufficient quantities to warrant treatment to eliminate them. However, the new granular activated carbon (GAC) filters do remove some chemicals that cause taste and odor problems. The GAC filters are not meant for removing other chemicals.
- Water sources
 - At least 75% of the raw water comes from the Mississippi River. Up to 25% of the water can come from the Vadnais chain of lakes watershed. Generally only one well pumps at a time and provides around 2% of the raw water.
- SPRWS
 - The McCarron’s treatment plant was built to handle higher average rates but rates have decreased to around 45 million gallons daily (MGD) and only 35 MGD during the winter.
 - The electricity rate structure set by Xcel is higher during the day, so SPRWS pumps water mainly during the night when the rates are lower. The reservoirs and water towers are used primarily during the day.

- The replacement cycle for the entire distribution network is 135 years.
 - SPRWS revenue is around \$38 million per year, the operations and maintenance budget is \$27 million per year and the leftover goes to the capital improvement budget.
 - Future directions
 - SPRWS wants to increase its visibility in the future to promote conservation efforts.
 - SPRWS has excess capacity and is looking to sell more of its water to the eastern suburbs.
 - Currently, SPRWS can pump 27 mgd from the Prairie du Chien – Jordan aquifer but the goal is to increase that to 50 mgd for redundancy purposes. The wells are located near the southeast corner of Vadnais Lake. The aquifer recharge area is essentially the entire metro area.
 - SPRWS is studying groundwater recharge rates and the amount of sustainable water withdrawals. Impacts from global warming are also being evaluated.
6. **Next steps** regarding the water supply portion of the Comp Plan. There was no time to discuss the outline in the packet, so please email or call Soderholm or Jacobson to share your thoughts.
7. **Next meeting** at the Public Works garage on May 14, 2007.

Meeting ended at 5:30 p.m.